LOVE WIVES, page 2035.

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HIS VALENTINE.

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ROYAL AND SOCIETY NEWS

Exclusive to "Modern Life."

The King Determines to have the War Officially Recorded.

I hear that it is the desire of his Majesty that this war shall be officially recorded. In other words, it is the determination of the King that the position of England shall be placed on record under an ægis which will secure for it acceptation in every part of the world. Up till now, of course, all the alleged "histories" of the war are mere money-making stunts, and as despatches of the British Field-Marshal at the front have been so few in number, and very far from being up-to-date or complete, it is certain that no accurate or reliable history of the war can be written by anyone. However, little by little we are arriving at the real facts of the war, and the remarkable diplomacy which preceded it. The latest revelation is, perhaps, the most amazing of all.

* * *

Amazing Revelations by Sir Edward Grey.

We all know that Mr. Lloyd George has placed it on record that before the war not one member of his Cabinet believed the war possible. We did not know, until Sir Edward Grey revealed the fact the other day, in his stinging reply to the German Chancellor, Bethmann-Hollweg, that as far back as 1906—eight years ago—British officers frankly discussed with Belgian officers in Belgium the probabilities of a German invasion of Belgium, and a violation of her neutrality by that Power. We did not know, also, that definite guarantees were given to the Belgians that we would never invade Belgium unless some other Power first did so, and then only in Belgium's defence.

Sir Edward Grey now makes the whole thing clear, by informing Bethmann-Hollweg that all these negotiations arose over "the building by the Germans of several strategic railway-lines over her Belgian frontier from the Rhine, which railways could only be designed for military purposes, the population thereabouts being too scanty to justify their existence otherwise."

* * *

When the Germans are Back in England.

Once again we have had a remarkable illustration of the blackguardly characteristics of the Germans on the high seas. My readers will pardon my reminding them of what I pointed out when the *Emden* was defeated, and, later on, when our ships, the *Good Hope* and the *Monmouth*, were sunk in the Pacific. It will be very necessary for these incidents to be kept in the public mind, for no sooner will the war be over than the Germans will be back again in England in bigger force than ever, and sloppy sentimentalists of the Archbishop of York and the Dr. Clifford type will be shouting for the reign of "brotherly love" and "forgiveness," and the re-admission of a million German spies to this country, in readiness for the betrayal of Britain when Germany's war of revenge begins! Unless the sane people of our country towns and villages keep the flies off their memories in regard to the traits of the Huns in this war, all the trouble over the Germans will be repeated.

* * *

When the Germans Capped Their Hideous Record.

You know what I said about Captain Von Muller, of the *Emden*, and the way some of the crackpots wanted to give him a banquet at the Guildhall, although his conduct, so far from being gallant and generous, was dictated solely by sordid considerations, and ceased to be generous immediately those considerations were no longer potent. And you will also remember what I said about the next naval fight, and the shameful way in which Count Von Spee allowed the *Good Hope* and the *Monmouth* to go down in mid-ocean without an effort to save the lives of any of those sixteen hundred British tars who went down with their admiral. This brutal act, which alone should be sufficient to compel the execration of every civilised nation in the world, was avenged a few weeks later, when Admiral Sir Richard Sturdee sank Count Von Spee's squadron (except the *Dresden*), but, being an English gentleman as well as a sailor, made every effort to rescue all the German seamen whom he could pick up, to the number of several hundreds.

* * *

The Incident of Hun-nishness par excellence.

But the latest British sea victory has provided the world with *the* incident of Hun-nishness *par excellence*. When, last Sunday week, the British fleet under Admiral Sir David Beatty sent the Germans flying back to their base, not only did the German admirals leave the men of their sinking cruiser, the *Blucher*, to their fate, as if they were dirt, but (it is now known) while the men of the British trawlers were endeavouring to save the drowning German tars, the German aviators hovered overhead and dropped bombs on the rescuing Englishmen! Really, it makes me choke with disgust that white men can be such loathsome hounds!

* * *

Cut This Out.

In these fast-moving days the public memory is painfully short, and if honest Britishers desire that the Germans shall be absolutely excluded from common companionship with themselves in these islands after the war, it will be necessary that some of these appalling incidents of German cowardice and contempt for human life should be cut out, and carefully stuck in books, for easy reference when the war-clouds have broken and the sun of peace shines brightly again. I recommend this little system to any of my readers who feel, with myself, that it will be a simple act of loyalty to one's own kith and kin to see that the Germans are never regarded as on the same plane as Britishers again.

* * *

The Hindoos Found the Germans Out Years Ago.

I may remind my readers of one curious fact. And that is that the "poor benighted Hindoo" has never placed the German on the same plane as the Britisher. With all his simplicity and his dog-like faith in the "white man," your hamal or kaarama knows a gentleman from a German—always! Half the native servants in India will not take Germans as their "sahibs"! And that was long before the war, or even before this century, for that matter. The Hindoo has not been a student of philosophy for ten thousand years for nothing. Stick this passage in your diary, reader, against the time when the sloppy sentimentalists and Quakers begin to shout about "brotherly love" to the Germans.

* * *

"Delicatessen!"

The humours of recruiting in London are innumerable. You may see some of them at Shepherd's Bush. What in days of yore was the evening Mecca of all the nuts and flappers in town, is now a flaring recruiting office, plastered with a thousand bills in red, white and blue, and a beery-looking crowd perpetually moving on the pathway. The thousands of "Tommies" behind the

WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY.
A private installation that will take a lot of dismantling.

scenario are not *en evidence* to the public, being limited to the Wood Lane entrance to the exhibition. All the passer-by sees is the aforesaid beery crowd, the perambulators and the recruiting sergeants, but there is the ring of true British personality all over the place, except on the other side of the road, where, right in front of the robustious recruiters, is a ham and beef shop which unblushingly advertises in big letters "Delicatessen"!

* * *

Romantic Baby's Interesting Potentialities.

All things considered, it was only right that Sir Samuel Evans should have decreed that the erring wife of Lieutenant Fremantle should be secured a sum of two-pounds-ten a week if only for the fact that, forlorn as is the baby's position to-day, it may one day recline in stately ease upon the benches of the House of Lords! For its father is not very distantly removed from the succession to the Cottesloe peerage. Old Sir Edmund Fremantle (who will have everybody's sympathy in this hateful washing of family linen in public) is brother to Lord Cottesloe, and one of the sons of that excellent Fremantle who was once able to boast that, either as a member of the House of Commons, or as a permanent official under the clock, and finally as a British peer, he had not missed a Budget speech for sixty-two years. He died in December, 1890, in his ninety-third year.

* * *

Famous Admiral's Unique Set of Decorations.

His eldest son, the present Lord Cottesloe, has a charming house in Buckinghamshire, near Winslow, where he is closely identified with local bodies, and the doer of much good, though unostentatious, public service. His eldest son is something over fifty, and for years commanded the Bucks Battalion of the Oxford Light Infantry. Before the late Lord Cottesloe became Secretary for War, his father had been erected into a Baron of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. He had fought at Copenhagen and Trafalgar.

The naval records of the Fremantles are illustrious, and the father of young Lieut. Fremantle, besides holding the honorary rank of Rear-Admiral of the United Kingdom, possesses a row of medals which is absolutely unique, for among them are the gold, silver, and copper medals of the Royal Humane Society, while his other decorations denote his services in the wars in Burma, New Zealand, Ashantee and elsewhere.

* * *

"Like Father, like Son!"

Young Fremantle is doubtless very sick and sorry for himself just now, but he may take heart of grace, for his father before him had a rash and giddy youth, and yet lived it all down, and rose to be the biggest admiral of his time. Sir Edmund Fremantle, in fact, suffered every indignity which the law of the service could put upon him. Once his sword was taken from him; he was tried by court-martial, with a provost-martial standing over him all through the trial with a drawn sword, for what was regarded as criminal indiscretion in running his boat right in amongst the rebels in the Maori War; while, before that, he had been placed under arrest for shooting a brother officer through the hand for disobeying his order not to fire upon some defenceless Chinamen whom they were pursuing.

* * *

The Nelson Touch.

Happily, those were the days of the Nelson touch, and after being in arrest for some time the affair was hushed up. Many years after he was again "in trouble," and censured by the Admiralty for landing at Tacoraddy, and treating Admiralty orders as waste-paper. Even in his old age he could not escape a bother, for when the

Russian Admiral Rojdestvensky was on the way to Port Arthur, he publicly accused Sir Edmund Fremantle of following the Russian ships with the object of keeping the Japanese Admiral, Togo, informed of the movements of the Russian fleet by wireless, a very wicked charge, seeing that Sir E. Fremantle was on the retired list, and finally superannuated.

* * *

"Live It Down, Lad!"

But, in spite of all his hare-brained deeds, and the trouble he encountered upon life's stormy wave, no living sailor achieved more of his country's respect, and nobody will think the worse of his son for marrying the sixteen-year-old flapper with whom he fell in love "in Westbourne Grove," nor for the other little matters that made the marriage an impossible one.

* * *

Soldiers, Old Maids, and Babies.

Suppose this war turns out to be another Thirty-Years-War! Don't call me a "blithering ass," kind reader, for you never know, you know! I am not going to enter into any arguments about how Germany will get saltpetre, corn, leather, gold, cotton, or sauerkraut—I only say, *Suppose* it becomes another Thirty-Years-War! Where do you suppose Old England will be then? This may strike you as a Christmas party conundrum. But it isn't. I am in earnest, deadly earnest! "And," as Lord Rosebery would say, "I am not alone."

* * *

Where Would Britain Be Then?

For the simple fact remains that Old England, long before then, would not only be on her beam-ends financially, but without men to carry on the war! That is the sort of problem that gives one "seriously to think." And, as it happens, quite a lot of clever people are thinking about it just now, and it is as the result of a conversation with Lady Kennedy over a proposal to approach the Home Secretary on an "extremely delicate matter" that I have had the country's crisis reluctantly brought home to me.

I say reluctantly, for it is always with reluctance that we contemplate the unpleasant. Never was this so clear as in 1915, when Britishers of all shades of (civilian) opinion eagerly grasp at any straw which seems to show that the war is about to end, although the gentlemen down at the War Office know perfectly well that it will go rumbling gently along for years to come!

* * *

The Day of the Unmarried Girl is Coming.

Nevertheless, our home questions, which for years have been the staple of the Parliamentary quidnuncs and bores, will one of these days have to take a back place to the important question of how another generation of British warriors is going to be reared, when all the marriageable men are fighting on the Continent, and the budget of babies has fallen to next to nothing. The old married men, in any case, will be dead, and the young ones abroad, so something drastic will have to be done if Britain is to retain her "place in the sun."

Now, to touch on the question of monogamy at present would be highly dangerous. So long as the people are blissfully convinced that the war will be over by Easter or Whitsuntide, or next Christmas, I must hold my tongue about a movement which has considerable "distinguished backing," and which, in a year or two, will take serious steps, with the aid of the churches, to bring about a change in our social and domestic laws which will enable our million unmarried girls to perform the duties which the Almighty intended them to perform just as certainly as the women who have had the good fortune to get a "plain gold band," on their fingers!

* * *

Wives Who Won't!

Anyway, it is not difficult to understand the mental attitude of the judge in the Divorce Court to the lady who for years had absolutely refused to consummate her marriage with her husband. Perhaps it was a good thing for him, if he only knew it, but it was rank fraud on the part of the lady, and it is a very good thing the judge "told her off"! Thousands of good women in England to-day would willingly do their duty to their

"And were you born in Paris, Mademoiselle?"
"Yes, M'sieu."
"What part?"
"All of me, M'sieu!"

ZEPPELINITIS.

These people are not really proud or stuck-up. They have merely been staying for a few days on the East Coast.

country under any honourable circumstances, instead of standing on a pack of shibboleths about a "platonic" marriage, which is always a failure, as it is in the case of Mr. and Mrs. J——, the lady and gentleman upon whose example the lady in the case refused to cohabit with the man she had married. As for the Swanage romance, our opinion is that the sixteen-year-old South African policeman who married the twenty-four-year-old girl should have had the judge's sympathy, instead of his censure. But then, you see, it was another judge, and judges do differ so nowadays.

* * *

The Prince of Wales at the Front.

The Prince of Wales is having a great time motoring about the war area. His Royal Highness drives his own car—and lets it go, too—and though his fond mother would have a fit if she knew it, he rarely lets his pipe out of his mouth, though at home he was never seen with one, and never once was seen smoking in the streets of Oxford. They still take care not to let him go near Paris, where his face is too well-known to the mannekins to be worth risking his Royal Highness's excellent upbringing. The Pragger-Wagger will see fortifications between Verdun and Belfort of a kind unknown in Britain, and when he was down in the Vosges the other day they took him out to see a line of eight hundred crosses marking the battlefield of one of the earliest fights for the possession of the lost province.

* * *

Glory or the Grave.

His Royal Highness listened very attentively to the stories of heroism on the part of the French troops in that bloody struggle, and the Prince, hat in hand, and followed by his fellow-officers from General French's staff, passed down the line of the crosses, looking as if he really felt touched at the sight. And no doubt he did. poor lad, for there is a fellow-feeling in this terrific war for every soldier of every nationality which is born of one's own prospects of "glory or the grave"!

* * *

Why Lord Roberts "Died Happy."

Incidentally, I heard a pretty story about old Lord Roberts which was retailed by the Prince of Wales to a friend of mine. His Royal Highness met the famous Field-Marshal in France when he went out to see the Indians, and the Prince says Lord Roberts "died like a saint," as if he was going to a pleasant day's shooting, and enjoyed it. And the reason he took it so philosophically was that he had just learnt that he was to be a grandfather at last, and that his great name and titles would be handed down to posterity by a child of his own blood. Male or female child did not matter in the case of the Roberts earldom, but, as it happened, it was a son who was born to Lady Edwina Lewin a couple of months after the death of the grand old warrior.

The child will be the third Earl Roberts one day, the earldom now being borne by its aunt, Lord Roberts's eldest daughter, who has never married, and it will be very well off, for Lord Roberts carefully invested the £100,000 which Parliament voted him after the South African War, and he already "had money" from his father, the late General Sir Abraham Roberts, K.C.B. Up till now no site for the statue of Lord Roberts has been chosen, but it is expected that the matter will be deferred until the war is over, so that the Indians can attend the unveiling of the statue. That will be the greatest pageant London has had since the Coronation of King George.

The *Cologne Gazette* says that "Like rocks the Turks stand before their enemies." We have always said that the Turkish army was a rocky on-.

LIVELY LITTLE LEADERS

Sir George Alexander's "Silver Jubilee."

I don't know how you are fixed, reader, but I'm getting just a wee bit tired of the war, or, at any rate, of writing about the war. So this week I am going to challenge the frown of my martial editor. I am going to write about the stage and "good old George," and damn the consequences, as Lord Milner would say, were he back at his old game of writing for the Press.

It is twenty-five years this week since Sir George Alexander commenced his career of management at the Avenue Theatre with "Dr. Bill," and I think that if there is any man on the stage who deserves special attention in any paper that is interested in the theatres, it is Sir George. For while he is not a genius, and is certainly not a great actor in the sense that Garrick and Henry Irving were great actors, he has been one of the bulwarks of the stage during the last quarter of a century, and he is a man who is bound to occupy no inconsiderable space in any future history of the modern theatre. I can therefore rightly begin by congratulating him upon the auspicious occasion that he has been celebrating this week, and wishing him long years of continued prosperity and fame.

And why is it right that Sir George Alexander should be specially singled out for praise and attention at a time when the thoughts of the whole world are occupied with more strenuous thought than the mimic battles of the theatre? For more than one reason, but for this reason above all others—that throughout his career he has represented splendidly, more than any other actor-manager, what I may call the evolution of the stage. It is true that by the very newest generation of playwrights and actors and students of the stage he may begin to be looked upon as something like just a fading link with a past generation. But even the youngest generation is not necessarily infallible. In any case, I submit that Sir George Alexander's career has well and finely linked the old with the new, and thus deserves what I have said it deserves, especial notice as representative of true progress in dramatic art.

It is a far cry from the rather stupid farce "Dr. Bill" to Bernard Shaw and Gordon Craig. And it is perhaps just because Sir George has, in his theatrical development, left such things as "Dr. Bill" in the distant past, and yet has stopped short of grasping at theatrical developments that are perhaps just a little too advanced for the general public at the present time, that he may be said to have hit the happy-medium mark as the carrier-on of the great progressive principles that he learned from his master, Henry Irving. Irving lifted a barren, melodramatic, untrue, inartistic stage a little way towards the heavens of artistic delight. Sir George Alexander continues the lifting, with, however, the very sensible motto ever before him that to attempt to fly too high, to try the impossible, would only cause the lifting to become a terrible dropping, and, like a smashed aeroplane, make the last state of the stage to be worse than the first. To put it in another way, Sir George Alexander always remembered that he was an artist, and that the theatre was, or should be, a home of art. But he also remembered that without a box-office no theatre could live, and that without a public to support him strenuously no actor could leave his mark upon his time, let alone become a knight. He has done perhaps the most difficult thing an actor-manager can perform—he has become rich and honoured by the sacrifice of nothing that was essential to his self-respect as an upholder of the traditions of Henry Irving, and by the encouragement of much in the way of advance that even his great master would have fought shy of.

It is quite true that many plays have been produced at the St. James's Theatre that have no pretensions to be remembered at all in any recognised history of the stage. But if you will cast your eye back to the productions at the St. James's you will see that Sir George has produced some of the masterpieces of his time, although perhaps not many of them. Indeed, to tell the truth, there have been few masterpieces knocking around during the last quarter of a century. Anyhow, Sir George Alexander was responsible for the production of "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray," "Lady Windermere's Fan," "The Importance of being Earnest," "His House in Order," "Paolo and Francesca," and other very fine plays that stand a fair chance of living, even if very few of them are masterpieces in the true sense of the word.

It was, however, in the production of "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray" that Sir George Alexander showed his immense courage, his confidence in good work, and his belief in the possibilities and progress of the stage. The sensation that this so-called "immoral" play caused long years ago can hardly be realised by the present generation, brought up as they have been almost to look upon even Ibsen as an old-fashioned plaything highly suitable for flappers. To-day everybody looks upon "Tanqueray" as a rather old-fashioned, Sunday-school effort to put real life and real emotions upon the boards. But at the time it was produced it was tenderly approached as a veritable shocker-of-shockers. The idea of putting a lady of the demi-monde upon the stage at all was quite revolting to our dear old-foozler papas and mammas. We were brought up to believe that all women were angels, and none of them fallen angels. And when the greatest playwright of his day, Pinero, put Paula Tanqueray on the boards with, in comparison with the other plays of his period, almost magnificent art, the Stage and the State and everything else were almost thought by the old-fashioned Victorians to be going down to the very depths of hell. But Pinero saw that art is life, on the stage as everywhere else. And Sir George Alexander gave Pinero the chance that even such a great judge and great actor as John Hare had refused to give him. Thus did the actor-manager whom we are honouring to-day bridge the gulf between a stupidly-idealistic stage and the partially-realistic stage which we have to-day, and which we perhaps should not have had (certainly not so quickly) if Sir George Alexander had not had the courage of his convictions.

Sir George Alexander has always encouraged new authors and new actors and actresses, so long as the ability was there. He used to be blamed a good deal in the early years of his management for engaging young actors from Oxford and Cambridge, with the object of making his theatre a fashionable rendezvous. But the criticism was very unjust, and was, indeed, perhaps largely confined to the old-fashioned stock-company actors, who were somewhat jealous of the so-called society actors who were instrumental in their being left out in the cold. But the fact remains that by his policy in general, by the way in which he and Lady Alexander became accepted as ornaments of the very best society of London, by the way in which he always worked for a clean and high-class stage, Sir George Alexander well and truly continued the work of Henry Irving, and taught the British public that actors and actresses were not the rogues and vagabonds that for centuries they had been considered to be, but were worthy members of one of the greatest of all professions.

I have left myself no space to speak of Sir George Alexander as an actor and as a man. As an actor, of course, his name will never live among the great, or even among those who closely approach the line of greatness. He has made no vital mark as an impersonator of great characters in great plays. He cannot live as a tragedian. He cannot live as a comedian. He cannot live as a great character actor. Yet in all of these capacities he has done good work right at the top of the class that is on the fringe of the first-class. He is a really splendid all-round actor who has, owing to his versatility and certain limitations of psychic power, perhaps "just missed it." As an exponent of romantic dramatic art he has his best chance of stage immortality, yet even here he may perhaps not reach the goal. As a man he is well loved by all who know him, and by millions who only know him from the front of the house. And it is a sure thing, as the Yankees say, that at this time of his "silver jubilee" the good wishes of the stage-lovers of England go out to him with a genuine and seldom-rivalled enthusiasm.

JONATHAN GRUB STRETE.

WHO, WHY, WHEN AND WHERE.

LITTLE QUESTIONS FOR PROMINENT PEOPLE.

Why King George has decided not to seize the whole of Germany's oversea possessions?

* * *

Why so many Germans are allowed to masquerade in Kensington under the pretence of being Danes?

* * *

Whether Princess Marguerite of Denmark will ever be able to get back to Denmark? Or whether she isn't rather glad the war gave her a good excuse for staying in London?

* * *

Whether it is the air of London that makes it such a pleasant refuge? And whether Grand Duchess George of Russia wants to go back to Petrograd?

* * *

Whether Lord Midleton (Right Hon. George Brodrick) has yet returned the Kaiser his Black Eagle?

* * *

Whether Lord Haldane has been seen in the khaki uniform he used to wear at the Kaiser's manoeuvres at Potsdam?

* * *

Whether Lord Reading (Sir Rufus Isaacs) is not laughing up his sleeve at the slough Lord Haldane has got himself into over Germany? And whether the L.C.J. will get the Woolsack in Lord Haldane's place?

* * *

Whether it is true, as alleged by a contemporary, that John Burns has two constables on duty every night outside his house? And, if untrue, is the statement not a gross form of political libel? And, if true, why should John Burns (and his family) require such special protection?

* * *

How so many of our peaceable fellow-citizens enjoyed being searched by the sentry on Rochester Bridge the other night?

* * *

How Wanton Wilhelm appreciates Russia's determination to treat the baby-killers as criminals, instead of prisoners of war?

* * *

What was the special nature of the despatch received by the *Times*, and so peremptorily censored last week-end?

* * *

Why did we let Von Tirpitz get into the Irish Channel, and who shall be the harmless necessary scapegoat?

* * *

When are the remainder of the young lady newspaper sellers going to be removed from the London streets?

Whether the Spanish Cabinet is wobbling quite as much on the war question as a good many people think it is, and whether Alfonso hadn't better be talked to about it?

* * *

If it isn't rather funny that the Kaiser and two of his principal castigators, Lord Fisher and Sir David Beatty, had birthdays within a few days of each other?

* * *

Why does the Admiralty still refuse to appoint more than one Catholic chaplain to 223 Protestant ones, and how our Irish seamen like it?

* * *

Chawncey: "Wotten bore! The War Office wouldn't have me—said my chest wouldn't be large enough to hold all the bally medals I should win."

The identity of the leading suburban publican and sinner who is suing a humorous customer for having altered the legend, "department specially reserved for bottle customers" to "bottle-*nosed* customers"?

* * *

Is Mr. Landfear Lucas (of the Spectacle-Makers' Company) trying to oust Mr. Algernon Ashton from his position of champion writer of letters to, and corrector of, the Press?

* * *

How many more "dear old nurses" of our Admirals and Generals are the halfpenny papers going to discover? And does the supervision of the first eighteen months or so of a man's life entitle a garrulous woman to be considered an authority on the character and ability of her victim?

* * *

How long are the German "turns," under American or Irish names, to be allowed "on the halls"? And is not the re-engagement of these people quite as reprehensible as the return of the German waiter?

* * *

If Admiral Beatty quite appreciates the affection he arouses in the hearts of susceptible flappers?

* * *

Is it true that there are ructions among the "specials" as to their treatment by the Government?

* * *

If the frequent rumours as to renewed visits of the Zeppelins to the East Coast and to London have a Teutonic source of origin?

* * *

What the *Star* meant by describing Sir David Beatty as "about thirty-eight," seeing that the gallant admiral was born in 1871?

THE INSPECTION OF JIMMY.

Last week the O.C. told me to go and see Lord Kitchener, as he was inspecting his troops. Of course, I had to take the remainder of the Company with me, but this was merely to prevent jealousy in the ranks; and if you go to "the pictures," and look carefully, you'll see that I did actually turn up.

Amy happened to be handy at the week-end, so I told her all about it.

"I saw Kitchener on Friday," I observed carelessly.

"Oh! How ripping! What did you say to him?"

"Say to him! Well . . . 'How's the missis, Herbert?'"

"I thought he wasn't married?"

"You needn't be so confoundedly particular—neither he is. I had to say something."

"And what did he think of you? Did he say you'd look better with your hair cut? Did he . . . oh, what *did* he say, for goodness' sake?"

"No; Kitchener never swears so mildly. After that, I merely said he could rely with the utmost confidence on my personal help to carry Britain through the present crisis. He thanked me from the bottom of his heart, and we kissed each other on either cheek."

"Jimmy! I don't believe you."

"And I think it's rotten of you. But come to the kinema, and you'll see your Jimmy there, when I'll give you the story from the very prologue. . . ."

As we waited for No. 7—our picture—to be shown, I continued:

"At six-thirty, while yet the cold stars shone down, we heard the roll-call."

"What did it say?"

I looked at her sadly. "It didn't say anything," I said at last. "Perhaps I should have said, 'We heard the roll called.' Besides, cheese is the only food with the privilege of speech. . . . However, as we swung off bravely, snow fell, ——"

"Cause and effect?"

"Snow fell, and on our long tramp towards our destination we battled gallantly with the unkind elements. On the huge slope of the common we became mere black ants on the white hillside."

"The quickness of the hand deceives the eye," said Amy. "Some feat."

"I was speaking metaphorically."

"And to a lady, too," she said, tossing her head.

"And while the winter wind, which, by the way, is not so unkind as your ingratitude, blew sleet, snow, and mud—a sort of Irish stew—into our faces, we lunched on bread and cheese. The pity of it! . . . While I was beating my breast and crying 'Woe, woe is me!' a fair snowdrop fell on my nose, and passed away like a lost soul burning in hell-fire."

"Then your nose was red?"

"Ah!" I said quietly, with pardonable pride, "*your* mode of description lacks refinement. . . . Still we lingered, and in hollow voices, 'He cometh not,' we said, until—lo! 'Slope . . . arms!' There he was, a tall, unbending figure, who looked at us for two-fifths of a second—I timed him—ere he went his way."

"There you are! I knew you were telling lies, Jimmy."

"It's my one hobby," I pleaded. "Then, maybe for an hour we waited, waited, waited, what time marching miles of men went by. Then—oh, the march homewards! . . . Oh, the march homewards! . . . Oh, the march ——"

"The attendant's coming to put you out, Jimmy," she warned.

"Well, oh, the march homewards—once only. Up to the eyes in slush, while the coy rain trickled down my back to the soles of my boots. Weary, worn, and sick unto death, we reached our domicile, where I poured cataracts from my footwear and wrung geysers from——those articles of clothing which it were not meet for your ears to hear mentioned. And yet—and yet, we are still alive. . . . Butchered to make a Roman holiday!"

"Which is absurd. *Q.E.D.*," said Amy. "But here's No. 7 at last. Snuggle up."

I snuggled. "Now! Watch . . . Here we are. See that big, tall fellow? That's Kitchener."

"Of course, I know that. But where are you?"

"I'm coming. Now, look carefully. At the top right-hand corner of the screen there's what looks like a piece of dirt on the film. See it?"

"Yes," said Amy.

"Well, it isn't really dirt. . . . As a matter of fact, that's me. I never take a decent photograph."

ERIC DE BANZIE.

TABLOID TOPICS.

That German check on the Allies at Soissons turns out to have been a blank one.

* * *

Those Arabs didn't really mind being repulsed at Muscat, as they simply loathe sour grapes.

* * *

The Germans' great complaint is that there is no corn on the market. And they are not likely to find any in Egypt either.

* * *

The spy who was discovered in the mess of the Third Battalion of the Egyptian Army found that he had got into a deuce of a mess.

* * *

The suggested whitening of the edges of pavements as a safety measure for pedestrians is likely still further to increase our respect for the white flag.

* * *

Some nasty people have lately been calling President Wilson "a grandmother." He has given them the lie direct by recently becoming a grandfather.

* * *

A neutral writer says that dancing has been entirely prohibited in Berlin. This won't be a great hardship; they will soon have the Bengal Lancers in the Unter den Linden.

Until lately the German fleet was in hiding. Last week it got it.

* * *

The Austrians who mobbed the Italian Embassy at Vienna were evidently tired of waiting to see It-ally.

* * *

Only a small number of Bills confronts Parliament this session, we read. We should be sorry to have to pay the principal one.

* * *

The German war correspondents' articles, declared the All-Highest, "have a high patriotic note." It is a note, at any rate, which is not honoured in any country except their own.

* * *

As the result of notes being sent across the Dutch-Belgian frontier under the wings of chickens, the Germans there are incensed at being outrivalled in fowl play.

* * *

Renewed activity is noted among the German bill-posters on the Russian front, who are everywhere affixing proclamations offering all kinds of nice things to the Russians if only they will surrender. So it is evident the Crown Prince's Christmas injunction, "Stick it!" has been taken seriously.

"MODERN LIFE'S" GALLERY OF WAR CELEBRITIES.

No. 8.—Rear-Admiral Charles E. Madden.

A CIGARETTE SELLER'S ROMANCE.

She was a pretty little girl in a cigarette kiosk. (Most little girls in cigarette kiosks are pretty. Probably if you are a young man with any keenness of perception you have noticed this; if not, take my tip, and do.)

Now, this particular little girl had many friends and admirers—another feature common to little cigarette girls—but of them all (the friends and admirers) it was Sandy McNab of the —th Highlanders who made her heart beat quickest under her pneumonia blouse.

Possibly it was the swing of the kilts, or maybe the impudent angle of his Glengarry—it might have been due to several reasons—but, anyway, Sandy was her favourite, and although she showered her smiles on many—these being both cheap and profitable—she saved her sweetest for Sandy.

The way they first met was not perhaps extraordinary, considering her position. He bought some cigarettes—Gold Flake, I think, to be accurate. She smiled at him; gave him a bad penny amongst his change; he was so interested in the smile that he neglected to notice the penny, which, for a Scotchman, wasn't bad, and—well, their friendship progressed.

However, in these times when one wears the King's uniform, be it Scottish or any other, things are most uncertain, and the day came when Sandy bought his last packet of cigarettes at the kiosk, took the little girl out to the theatre for the last time, and embarked for ——. The Censor forbids me to tell you where.

The parting was not particularly pathetic. In fact, it was so ordinary that it is hardly worth recording. Pathetic partings, as a rule, are confined solely to melodrama and novelettes. In real life you say, "Good luck! So long!" go and have a drink, if you are a man, or glue your nose against the shop windows if you are a woman.

But still the little girl in the cigarette kiosk was not hard-hearted, and although she devoted the best part of her spare hours to a man in the Naval Reserve, yet she found time to find out from a friend who had a cousin whose great chum's fiancé knew a man in the same regiment as Sandy, how that regiment was progressing, for Sandy was no hand with a pen, and beyond an official post-card very occasionally, she had no direct news of him.

She thought of him so much that one morning she hummed the "Bluebells of Scotland" whilst dusting the kiosk, and in the midst of her song the friend whose cousin's chum, etc., arrived in breathless haste to say that Sandy McNab's regiment had leave and was coming home in ten days' time. The little girl in the cigarette kiosk was so wildly excited that she forgot to keep an appointment with the Naval Reserve man. She bought two new blouses, a pair of silk stockings, and gave wrong change five times, and Turkish instead of Egyptian cigarettes three times, all in one day. The other nine days she spent wondering if Sandy would bring her a present from the Front.

Now, the friend—I mentioned her above—knew the time of Sandy's arrival at Victoria, and duly conveyed the information to the little cigarette girl on a cryptic postcard, which ran, "S. arrives V. 3.30 W." The little girl quite understood this, although her family did not, and she made up her mind that, as a joyful surprise to Sandy—and having Wednesday afternoon off—she would go to Victoria Station to meet him. Accordingly she did, attired all in her very best.

Victoria was a crowded scene of wild excitement—old and young, men, women and children, perambulators, dogs and all sorts of other impedimenta.

The little girl stood on the step of a weighing machine and watched the throng with eager eyes. She did not cheer when the train came in, but just scanned the many faces for the one she knew. And, wonderful to relate, she saw him at once, tall and bronzed as ever, Glengarry a-tilt, and kilt swinging as he walked. She waited for him to come by, but he paused by a woman with two children, a baby, and a pram. She watched. Yes, he spoke to them, he kissed the woman, the children, and even the baby.

The little girl got off the step of the weighing machine and went to the telephone box and rang up the man who was in the Naval Reserve.

. . . . . .

Now, of course, you think this is a very silly story, with a most *un*original ending, but you are wrong in a way, because it was not his wife with the children, the baby and the pram, but his sister.

All the same, he did not marry the little girl in the cigarette kiosk, because her husband came home from the Front all safe and sound.

By the way, I don't think I have mentioned her husband before. Neither had she! NOEL HINTON.

THE RAID.

Three sharp reports, and then a whirring. Mr. Jones sat up in bed and listened.

Three more reports, louder than the first, and again that humming noise. Mr. Jones got out of bed.

He crossed the room to the dressing-table, muttering to himself, and lit a candle. Anyone listening would have heard a few words concerning coal cellars and calmness.

He returned to the bedside. His wife was sleeping quietly. He shook her by the shoulder. She awoke, and sat up.

"Wh-wh-wh-what's the matter, Percy?"

Mr. Jones placed a finger to his lips, motioning silence. She understood.

"Get up, quickly," he whispered.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

That noise again!

His wife clutched at him, terrified. He soothed her, and, wrapping a dressing-gown about her shoulders, led her to the door.

"You go downstairs, dear. I will call the maid, and we will follow immediately."

He saw her to the top of the stairs, and then trotted back to the servant's room. He knocked at the door. After a few moments, punctuated by more explosions from without, the girl asked what was the matter. He told her to put on some clothes as quickly as she could, and then to go downstairs. He went back to his bedroom. He put on his jacket, took the insurance policy from his private drawer, and went outside again. The maid was coming from her room, and together they descended the stairs. Mrs. Jones was waiting at the bottom.

He led them to the cellar, and opened the door. Holding the lighted candle in one hand, and assisting his wife with his free arm, he led the way down the steps. It was cold; very cold. The two women were scared, but he assured them everything would be quite all right. Better the cold than that they should be crushed beneath the falling brickwork of their own house. Then a fusilade of reports burst out. Mrs. Jones screamed. The maid flung her arms about Mr. Jones's neck. The candle fell to the floor, spluttered, and went out. They remained there for two hours.

. . . . . .

Outside, in the road, Bertie Blanchard, returning late from a visit to friends, sat in his cycle-car, and muttered bad words to himself. The car had come to a full stop in the middle of the road. It was dark and cold, and Bertie longed for his bed. For ten minutes he had tried to make the thing move.

He gave the pedals a vicious push. A few protesting snorts came from the engine. e tried once more. It whirred loudly, and then back-fired with such vigour that Bertie himself was startled.

He made another effort. After a few gasps it settled to a steady "race" for two minutes, its roar being emphasised at intervals by more back-firings. Then it slackened, and after several more spasmodic outbursts, ran smoothly.

Bertie put in the clutch, and with a final tatoo from the cylinders, the car purred away into the night.

J. A. COOK.

ROUGE AND RUFFLES.

A Query.

Has anybody seen the sun lately? If so, they might sent me a postcard (picture, please) as to its whereabouts. I thought I saw a glimpse of it yesterday peering shyly, like a debutante, through the folds of a great white cloud, which might have been a Court train as well. But the moment I went out to investigate I saw the faint curve of its yellow cheek vanish hastily, and a second later a splash of rain fell heavily on my upturned face as if in mockery. Half-an-hour afterwards it was raining so heavily that I had to take a taxi instead of the walk through the Park I had promised myself to see if as yet any crocuses had set a torch alight upon the grass.

* * *

The Degenerates

Although a lot of men have gone to the war, there seems to be a lot more who haven't gone. I happened to find myself in a train last Saturday, full of a struggling crowd of pushing, swearing men, whose talk was of "goals," and the chances of this or that or t'other fellow scoring one. I know the subject of football matches has been done to death, and that the war enthusiasts have, through the Press, shed tears of blood upon it, but, even so, I cannot refrain from entering my protest. Government men at work upon its armies' needs there may have been, a few soldiers, a handful of sailors, among the great mass of masculine humanity in which presently, as I emerged from the station, I found myself caught, but, for the most part, the crowd was made up of loafers, of men mean enough, while the flower of the country dies for them, to ring muffin bells at football matches. It is small consolation to reflect that while these men and their descendants live, the physically fit man, the morally fit man, the mentally fit man will die. It is a poor look out for England in the next big war if she has only the off-shoots of degenerate humanity to protect her. Not that they will, unless conscription is in force then. They will, as their father and grandfather before them did, go instead to watch a game of ball.

* * *

Love Wives.

A lot of people now seem to be wearing halos for hats. I am referring to the unsubstantial-looking specimens of headgear with broad, vapoury tulle brims. We don't get our fashions from Paris any more, or I should swear the halo hat came from there, for in Paris every man looks upon a woman as an angel. She may be a fallen one sometimes, but, even so, nobody would deny her the right to a halo hat. It is a delightful thing to be a woman in France. Your husband always loves you, even if—which is nearly invariably the case—he loves somebody else as well. I wonder if the day will ever come when an enlightened England will allow a man to have, besides the usual useful, real wife, an ornamental, charming love-wife or so. The real wife wouldn't suffer; not a bit of it. Lots of the married men, if they had their time over again, would remarry the same woman, for man, in spite of his inclination to wander, is a conservative animal, and when it comes to living perpetually with anybody, would naturally prefer a woman who knows all about him, from his slippers to his sins, to the novice who has not yet served her apprenticeship in marriage, and discovered that a lover and a husband are as far apart from one another as the two Poles.

* * *

Healing Hands.

There seems to be a glut of mimosa this year. Everywhere you go you see these slender green branches heavily weighted with downy, canary-coloured midget balls offered for sale at a ridiculously low price, as cheap as you would have got in the old normal days of Nice. There must be few people indeed, even in these hard-hit times, who cannot afford to lighten their rooms with bunches of this imitation sunshine. There is a lot of moral as well as artistic value in flowers. I often think the fact should be more widely known than it seems to be. A room, a garden, a world, a life, with flowers in it, is a very different thing from a room, a garden, a world, a life, all bare. And there is no need for rooms or lives to be empty of sunshine or beauty. I passed a workhouse the other day, and some strange red flowers, whose name I do not know, bloomed, even in winter, upon its harsh wall. Just now I met a shabby little factory girl with a smile and a bunch of violets, and in the sick room I came from a bowl of snowdrops upon the wooden table had breathed of spring. Where there are flowers there can be, or, at least, there should be, no misery, for flowers have healing hands. And they are royal, too. As Browning has it:

> "And cactuses a queen might don,
> If weary of a golden crown,
> And still appear as royal."

Louise Heilgers.

"TOMMY" IN THE BOIS DE BOULOGNE.
"Aftair you, m'sieu'!"

It took a full army corps of Huns to wreck a train in Belgium the other day. With us, here, an absent-minded signalman can do the job by himself.

* * *

The frequent German attacks on La Bassée suggest that the enemy imagines the place to be a centre of the brewing industry.

* * *

We have always admired our American contemporary *Puck* for its humour, but since it published in its late *Automobile* number a page of appreciative letters from its readers under the Shakespearian quotation, "What fools these mortals be," our admiration has reached its limit.

BY THE WAY.

Free education's the curse of the poor;
It elevates kids from the gutter.
It teaches the boy to write things on your door,
And the girl other things on your shutter.

I am moved to quote these soul-stirring lines after overhearing an argument between two bright specimens of Council schooling in a narrow passage not a thousand miles from the MODERN LIFE offices. One had drawn a circle in chalk on the back door of a printing-works, and was defying his companion to point out where the South Pole was. Shackleton, Horatio Bottomley and the *Daily Mirror* were the authorities quoted mainly, but I could not wait to hear the end of the discussion. There are still, you know, people who hold that the world is flat—otherwise sane and, according to reputation, educated people, too—but the world reciprocates the compliment and holds them to be flat in their turn.

* * *

What I wrote last week about the bull-at-a-gate style of dramatic criticism they cultivate in the Antipodes has inspired a correspondent to forward one or two gems of this nature from a monthly magazine called the "Tryad." Chirps the "critic" blithely, in reference to a performance of "Miss Hook of Holland":—"If Mr. Dodds had looked like the sort of bandmaster that a Miss Hook could reasonably harbour any desire to cuddle close to, perhaps Miss Rae's thin pretence of being eager might not have seemed so cold and dead. . . . . Mr. Dodds comes a bad ninety-seventh to my worst previous recollection of a young man hopelessly attempting to play a part of this kind. . . . . If he merely came a bad twenty-third, I would not discourage him for the world. I am convinced that this is not his true line of promise. He should try tulip-culture, or a motor-cycle." The critic's view of a lady in a melodrama runs to this:—"She is acting so badly, and she bids fair soon to act so much worse, that I fancy she ought to make a big Williamsonian success. (Williamson's is the big tour 'down under.') Pretty soon she will be as bad as Miss Tittell Brune, the champion bad actress up till now; and that will be glorious, maybe."

* * *

Talking of the Antipodes, the New Zealand War Ministry is endeavouring to cope with a difficulty, the exact converse of one our own War Office has to face. In the Foot Guards they are accepting men of no more than 5ft. 7in. in height, though the peace standard is 5ft. 8½in. In New Zealand a Maori contingent for the front has been sanctioned, and they can't get enough small men. By small men I mean men of no more than 6ft. 2in. and 14 stone, which is the maximum a horse is considered capable of carrying with advantage to man and beast. Maoris average 6ft. 5in, and the trouble is to get enough undergrown (!) volunteers. For the Maoris won't be denied. Personally, I should be rather sorry to "deny" some thousand men of six-and-a-half feet apiece.

* * *

I heard a delicious story yesterday of a foreign nobleman and an indiscreet English honeymoon couple. The foreigner, who is attached to one of the London embassies, speaks English perfectly. He was travelling in Italy when the happy pair, who had only been married a week or so before, got in and, seeing a pronouncedly foreign-looking elderly gentleman sitting in the opposite corner immersed in the *Tribuna*, thought fit to exchange confidences in their own language. The stranger in a moment or two leaned forward, and, with many apologies for interrupting a private conversation, hinted that he was well acquainted with the English tongue. The bride's blushes nearly set the carriage on fire.

* * *

A cart belonging to one of the Auxiliary Stores—I forget whether it was Army and Navy, Co-operative, Civil Service or what—was passing down Oxford Street the other morning with a crate on top marked conspicuously "AUX." The basket in the crate very obviously contained eggs. Said a dear old lady: "Well, I never! Auk's eggs for the wounded soldiers in hospital. What next?"

* * *

An officer in the Army is just now wrestling with a somewhat curious problem. His grandfather was in the Indian Army, and his father was born on Italian soil while the grandmother was on the way home. Thus my friend's father spent the first three weeks of his life in Italy. The father also became an officer in the Indian Army, and *his* wife in turn gave birth to a

The Scottie: "You won't be out at the elbows long if you join the Army."

The Loafer: "What abaht out at the knees?"

son on her way home from India. Now the son—the officer now under Sir John French's command—is wondering what is going to happen to him if he does not to respond to Italy's call to mobilisation, as it appears that by Italian law the child of the second generation is reckoned of Italian nationality, and is, therefore, liable to military service.

* * *

The popular S. M. J. ("Sammy") Woods is now one of the army of cricketers serving in khaki. Ranjitsinhji once described Woods to me as the greatest personality he ever played cricket with bar two—MacLaren and Jackson. The latter received his Blue for Cambridge from "Sammy" a quarter of a century ago, Woods remarking of a then recent batting failure by Jackson, "If it's that cap you're anxious about, Jacker, you can have it now." It was in the same season (1890) that Woods performed the rare feat of taking all ten wickets in a first-class match —10 for 69 for the 'Vársity v. C. I. Thornton's Eleven.

* * *

While the appearance of Sir Charles Santley, aged 81, and Edward Lloyd, aged 70, together on a concert platform was distinctly interesting, the song selected by Santley was an extremely poor one. "Son of the Ocean Isle" was composed by him on some words of Mrs. Hemans, and, frankly, the genius of our G.O.M. of song never lay in the paths of composition. Yet he has been pretty caustic about other artists' performances, and I well remember his cruel description of a well-known voice as "very high, very low, and very middling." It is a commonplace to say that Santley was the greatest baritone that ever lived in England.

* * *

From the lovely Worcestershire village of Broadway I learn that 133 of its population of a few hundreds have 'listed for the war. Bravo! These include the local M.F.H., Mr. Scott, whose departure is by way of cracking up, *pro tem.*, the North Cotswold Hunt. Also, Broadway is "putting up with" some sixty of the Belgian refugees—bravo again! Mary Anderson de Navarro, now a very old resident, goes about among these poor people like an angel of goodness, I am told, and she had a lot to do with the Christmas and New Year entertainments provided for them.

* * *

A correspondent writes: "Mr. Louis Meyer presents." You have not often seen those words in bold type, have you? It was always the star attraction that got the big type in Meyer's announcements. And he was just the same in private life. Louis Meyer was one of the very few people that I have ever met who was entirely unspoiled by success. I knew him in "Brum" twenty years ago; I knew him when he kept an antique shop off Piccadilly; I knew him as a newspaper artist; and I knew him as a prosperous West End manager. He was the same to me and all his old friends in all the rôles. If you were wearing a two days' beard and last year's hat, and he, in an astrakhan coat and with a Rolls-Royce waiting round the corner, met you in the Strand, he would drag you—if you were an old friend—into the nearest hostelry to have tuppenny drinks. He had not an ounce of "side." A better tribute to his lack of "swank" could not be afforded than the way in which the obituary notices of Meyer varied. I have not seen one veracious account of his career—because only a very small coterie knew the facts. Vaughan Dryden, the sketch-writer, journalist and maker of witty lyrics, knew him as well as anybody, and *he* could a tale unfold. It would be interesting reading, an he would unfold it.

P.C. A1 (catching spy red-handed): "May I ask where that pigeon is off?"
Schmidt (who has been spying on the quay): "Home mit the result of the football match, sir."

* * *

The war medals are beginning to fly about, and the example of the Kaiser, who has splashed Germany with a hundred thousand Iron Crosses, is being tardily followed elsewhere. Already the Distinguished Conduct Medal is no uncommon sight in the streets of London, on the breasts of returned "trenchermen," while the Victoria Cross is occasionally in evidence. These, of course, are the decorations that really denote something, and they are duly honoured wherever they are seen. No one has yet worn the new "military medal" which his Majesty invented for this war. Prince Youssopoff has come over from Russia with cartloads of Russian medals for the officers of the Allied armies; the Legion of Honour and the French military medallion are now worn by hundreds of British soldiers; and the German Emperor is garnishing the breasts of his generals and the Austrian diplomats with the Red and Black Eagles.

* * *

Up till now, however, no medals have been awarded for the war for the ordinary British troops. In fact, the medal has not yet been designed, nor the ribbons and bars, and, in any case, it is the rule in this country that medals are not given unless victory is assured. So it will be a long time yet before the European War medal ribbons join the green, white, blue and yellow of the South African on the tunics of our gallant Tommies. What is certain, however, is that when they *do* get them, no one but the incorrigible grouser will be able to say they weren't well won!

THE LOITERER.

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IF the noble efforts and splendid courage of our Army and Navy are to be of the greatest use to our Country, it is essential that those of us who are unable to take our places in the fighting line should keep the wheels of industry and commerce revolving.

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IN TIME OF WAR PREPARE FOR PEACE

IN STAGELAND.

Much water has flowed under the bridges since "The Girl in the Taxi" was first produced. Moreover, it seems a little odd for the Garrick to be selected as the venue of this popular revival, but then the Garrick stage happened fortunately to be "at liberty." The principal honours, it goes without saying, are borne off by Mdlle. Yvonne Arnaud as Suzanne, "the" girl of all girls. It is as charmingly staged as ever, and the bright and piquant music helps to make it as sure a winner in wartime as in peace.

A revisit to "David Copperfield" shows Sir Herbert's magnificent production playing to "full capacity" after six weeks. It is a treat to watch the scenes between Mr. and Mrs. Micawber (Miss Sydney Farebrother), and the way they take their "calls" together. For the convenience of French and Belgian visitors, the adapter has written an admirable synopsis of the play, which he appropriately signs with his full name of "Louis Napoleon Parker."

H. B. Irving tells me that he will at once return to theatrical management, in a new comedy by Horace Annesley Vachell, called "The Searchlights." I am delighted to hear it, for there are great dramatic possibilities in Mr. Vachell, judging by his splendid novels. (Have you read "The Hill," the moving story in which he draws so freely on his own schoolboy days at Harrow? If not, get it at once.) H. B. has engaged a cast of half-a-dozen stars of the first magnitude—Holman Clark, Fay Davis, Margery Maude, Kate Bishop, and Reginald Owen.

Revivals, and again revivals! This time it is to be that quaint drollery, "Baby Mine," chosen to follow "Our Boys" at the Vaudeville. Luckily, both Weedon Grossmith and Iris Hoey are available for this, the latter hurrying home from New York so as to get here in time.

A really great reception awaited "A Chinese Honeymoon," notwithstanding that its original London run was one of nearly four years. Frank Curzon has not secured any of the old cast, but has got a very fine and large one, nevertheless. This is especially true of the good work of Marie George, Dorothy Minto, and Edward Sass as the Emperor.

In "A Busy Day," at the Apollo, Mr. Claude Carton has provided an admirable piece of fun for Charles Hawtrey and Miss Compton. The latter, as "Mrs. Cosmo Garrington," is intent upon finding a successor to her first husband, and, needless to say, she succeeds. She is perfectly aided and abetted by the droll and inimitable Mr. Hawtrey, who, *inter alia*, tries his 'prentice hand at shopkeeping. Most efficient aid is given to this pair by, among others, Doris Lytton, E. H. Kelly, Mona Harrison—who makes her tiny little part stand out with a vivid distinctness and distinction—and Sydney Paxton.

If "A Busy Day" is far enough away from Carton's earlier methods as a playwright, he is at least frank about it. He was out to write just a jolly piece of fun, and in this he has succeeded. What is more, there is often a neatness and ease about the dialogue which more than vaguely suggest the Carton of "Liberty Hall," "Sunlight and Shadow," and "Wheels Within Wheels."

Sir George Alexander has been widely interviewed and paragraphed concerning the completion of his twenty-fifth year in London management. Long may he wave! I have a lively recollection of interviewing Sir George for a great daily paper just four years ago, when he had "come of age" as manager, first of the old Avenue, and secondly of the St. James's. Perhaps the best of his stories has relation to the offer of his services as "leading man" to Mr. Gatti, of the Adelphi, who promptly engaged him at £50 a week. This happened, I believe, when the late William Terriss had temporarily quitted the Adelphi for Sir Henry Irving's company.

THE UNDERSTUDY.

OURSELVES AND OTHER PEOPLE.

QUITE FREE.

"Why do they call this a free country?" asked the unwashed Anarchist.

"Because," answered the respectable citizen, "you are at liberty to leave it if you don't like it."

* * *

POOR PAPA.

Clara: "There is only enough to about half-fill this trunk. What shall I do—fill it with paper?"

Mother: "No; let your father pack it."

* * *

DISCONTENT.

"Man wants but little here below"—
So runs the good refrain.
Alas! That little always is
What's hardest to obtain.

* * *

A LOOPHOLE.

"Here is a preparation of my own," said the druggist. "It will cure you when everything else fails."

"But I haven't tried everything else yet," remonstrated the customer."—*Judge.*

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GOT HER NUMBER.

Woman Shopper: "I want a pair of socks for my husband."

Clerk: "What number?"

Shopper: "He's number three."

—*Ladies' Home Journal.*

* * *

HER EXCUSE.

"Susie Bumkum is very fond of outdoor sports."

"Oh, is she?"

"Yes; she offered that as an excuse for going out riding with Mrs. Jenks's husband last Sunday!"—*Judge.*

WHERE IGNORANCE IS BLISS.

HUSBAND: "*I want to know, once and for all, who is master in this house?*"

WIFE: "*You'll be happier if you don't find out.*"

—Sydney Bulletin.

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The book, which is being distributed broadcast, free of charge, is full of photographic reproductions showing how these unseen forces are being used all over the world, and how thousands upon thousands have developed powers which they little dreamed they possessed. The free distribution of the 100,000 copies is being conducted by a large London institution, and a copy will be sent post free to anyone interested. No money need be sent, but those who wish to do so may enclose 2d. (stamps) to cover postage, etc. All requests for the free book should be addressed to: National Institute of Sciences, Free Distribution Dept. 89J, No. 258, Westminster Bridge Road, London, S.E. Simply say you would like a copy of "The Key to the Development of the Inner Forces," and mention "Modern Life."

HIS EXCUSE.

"This is a pretty time of night for you to be coming home, Jeremiah!"

"I know, my dear; but I hadn't anywhere else to go."

—*Baltimore American.*

* * *

UNNECESSARY.

"Did you tell Binks I was a fool?"

"No; I thought he knew it."

—*Harvard Lampoon.*

* * *

PERSONAL LIBERTY.

Visitor: Which of those hotels is the better?

Town Guide: Wal, one of 'em has all rooms with baths, and the other believes in personal liberty—you can have a bath or not, just as you like.

—*Chicago News.*

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